

Lesson 3
(Adapted from *Genesis, Vol. 1* by James Montgomery Boice)

- I. Six-Day Creationism (This is the position held by Faith Baptist Church.)
- A. This is the Biblical teaching, face value, without reading into the text of Genesis. Again, many six-day creationists have a problem with the gap theory because they see it as a way to acknowledge an old earth. However, as we have emphasized, there is *no contradiction whatsoever* between believing in the gap theory *and* literal six-day creationism.
 - B. Several excellent organizations have forwarded the message of six-day creation in the scientific community. They include Answers in Genesis and the Institute for Creation Research.
 - C. Major Points of Belief:
 - 1. Creation took place within the timeframe of six 24-hour days. “Since God’s revealed Word describes this Creation as taking place in six ‘days’ and since there apparently is no contextual basis for understanding these days in any sort of symbolic sense, it is an act of both faith and reason to accept them, literally, as real days” (Whitcomb and Morris as quoted by Boice, pp. 65-66).
 - 2. Evolution fails to explain the universe and life itself. Rightly referencing the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, creationists see the universe as “running down.” The 2nd Law of Thermodynamics emphasizes that things tend to disorder over time and that they do not rearrange themselves into an orderly fashion. Evolution teaches that random disorder produced the complexity of life and the universe as we know it. Simply stated, this is an absolute impossibility. Whitcomb and Morris:

The plain facts of the situation, therefore, are that evolution has been simply assumed as the universal principle of change in nature, despite the fact that there is no experimental evidence supporting it and despite the still more amazing fact that universal experience and experimentation have demonstrated this universal principle of change to be its very opposite: namely, that of deterioration” (Boice, p. 66).
 - 3. Uniformitarianism (the belief that the structures of the earth, the strata, and the fossil record formed over billions of years) is incapable of explaining the clear evidence. The strata and fossil record are in far more agreement with a catastrophic event—the flood of Noah’s day.
 - D. A Problem
 - 1. Six-day creationism’s major problem lies in the *apparent* age of the earth. Scientists argue the universe must be old if the light from distant stars can be seen on earth. Boice (who is not a six-day creationist) outlines several scientific lines of argument against a young earth (Boice, pp. 69-70).
 - 2. Creationists rightly argue that the universe was created with the appearance of age, and this could include light emanating from distant stars. Other

objections can be could be countered by the gap theory, but one must be careful to confine that to geology and not impose it upon the fossil record.

- E. While we may have many questions that the Bible does not address, the six-day creation view is the Biblical viewpoint. It represents the text honestly and honors the text over the ever-changing theories of science.

II. Theistic Evolution

- A. Evolution without God is not a possible position for Christians. Some, therefore, have proposed a compromise view known as *theistic evolution*.

1. Theistic evolutionists endorse the model of evolution as the operative principle by which God brought about life on earth. They include God in their scientific theory, but He is not the immediate direct Creator. He is the creator of the process.
2. God appears in the theistic evolution model when science alone is insufficient to answer certain questions (Boyce, p. 50):
 - a. The origin of matter
 - b. The form of matter
 - c. The emergence of life
 - d. The appearance of personality and God-consciousness in man
3. At least two eminent fundamentalist scholars hinted at the possibility of this position: B.B. Warfield and James Orr. Of the two, Orr came the closest to endorsing the position.

- B. Problems with Theistic Evolution

1. It assumes that the process of evolution is true. This assumption is huge because mounting evidence argues against evolution as a workable principle. The “sudden appearance of major groups of species” within the fossil record cannot be reconciled with the evolutionary principle (Boice, p. 52).
2. It assumes that God’s intervention in all history is merely occasional, rather than normative. The Bible paints a picture of God as active, not passive, throughout all the epochs of time. Theistic evolution relies on the Laws of Natural Selection with only occasional intervention of God.
3. Theistic evolution does not take the clear words and descriptions of the Biblical account literally or seriously. The creation story becomes more of a symbolic myth than a literal account. For Bible-believing Christians, this is unacceptable.
4. Theistic evolution must deny that Adam is the human from which all others descended. Adam becomes merely a catch name for highly evolved humans. The Bible, however, always presents Adam as a singular man—a precursor to Christ (Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:22-23 and 45).

III. Progressive Creationism

- A. “God created the world directly and deliberately, that is, without leaving anything to ‘chance,’ but that he did it over long periods of time that correspond roughly to the geological ages. Moreover, this creation is still going on” (Boice, p. 72).

1. This position allows for the “big bang” theory as God created the heaven and the earth, but the Bible does not say exactly how.

2. Each of the six days of creation represents long expanses of time during which the creative processes of each day continued until completion. Of course, this denies the literal, 24-hour day insisted upon in the Biblical text.
- B. Problems with Progressive Creationism
1. Progressive creationism denies the literal, 24-hour-day model clearly presented in the Biblical text.
 2. Progressive creationism assumes death and decay prior to Adam's fall. Animals, for example, lived and died after their day (epoch of time) prior to Adam's sin.
 3. Progressive creationism seeks to amalgamate old-earth science and the fossil record with the Bible. It bows the knee to uniformitarian geology, something completely unnecessary for the Bible believer.
- IV. Summary
- A. The Bible plainly teaches a literal, six 24-hour day creation period. Therefore, creation beginning on the first day of creation week argues for a *young* creation. The first day of creation week is the beginning of earth's history as we know it. This likely places the beginning of creation history at less than 12,000 years ago.
 - B. The gap theory satisfies the Biblical text without reading into it. It answers the creation of the angelic host and the timing of Satan's fall. It may also answer some scientific arguments for a geologically old earth, but that is not its primary focus. The Biblical text, not science, is the basis for our faith.
 - C. The best view is probably old-earth/young-creation. It is NOT a compromise view. It simply fits the Biblical text better without adding to the text or making unwarranted assumptions. It is a thoroughly orthodox (fundamental) view.

The Days of Creation

(Lesson 4)

Introduction: Having established the creation of the heaven and earth, the subsequent deluge that made earth "without form and void," and the presence of the Spirit of God hovering over the catastrophe, Moses introduces the 6 days of creation. Remember several salient points:

1. The work of each day is limited to the formula "and God said...and it was good." The specifics of each day come between those phrases. Randomly adding other things to any of the days is pure speculation.
2. The days of creation as described are literal, 24-hour days. The unique Hebrew phraseology makes this matter inescapable. Any theory that proposes the days are long periods of time is a theory not supported in Scripture. It is pure speculation and ultimately a denial of the plain meaning of the words.
3. God spoke creation into existence by His word. Jesus is the Word (John 1:1-3). God spoke creation into existence and He is, therefore, transcendent from His creation.

Pagan mythologies see “gods” in wind, water, etc. Jehovah is separate from His creation and sovereign over His creation.

I. The First Day (1:3-5)

A. Having already created the heaven and the earth, God spoke light into existence on the first day.

1. The light created on the first day was not sunlight, but light itself. The light bearers (sun, moon, stars, etc.) would not be created until day 4.
2. The newly created light drove back the darkness that had enveloped the earth of verse 2. The newly created light functioned as a measurement of time—day and night; evening and morning. Later, the sun and the moon would reflect time through light and darkness.
3. The light of the first day may be the Shechinah Glory of God—the light of His presence (II Cor. 4:6 hints at this possibility). Remember, prophetically speaking, Jesus the Messiah is the Light (Isa. 60:1)!
4. The “chronology of the text emphasizes that god is the *ultimate* source of light. The dischronologization probably functions as a polemic against pagan religions, which worship the creation or creatures, not the Creator upon whom creation depends” (Boyce, p. 61).

B. The result of God creating light was the separation of light from darkness. While they are opposites, they work in tandem to define time.

C. God named the light “Day” and the darkness “Night,” indicating His sovereign control over both. Naming is an act of sovereignty and dominion. The Creator acts in dominion over His creation.

D. God defined the first day as the evening and the morning. In Jewish thought, sunset begins a new day. That day ends at the next sunset. Therefore, a Hebrew day comprises the evening (dark time) and the morning (light time). Again, a 24-hour day is the inescapable conclusion of this passage.

II. The Second Day (1:6-8)

A. Like the first day, the second day of creation was a day of division. On day two, God divided the waters above from the waters beneath. The division between the two “waters” is the atmosphere, what we call the “air.” Fruchtenbaum explains:

“This is the creation of the atmospheric heavens, the creation of the air. This is the expanse; it is the vault of heaven. The purpose is: Let it divide the waters from the waters. This is the second of five divisions, the expanse dividing waters from waters. It is a kind of horizontal area extending through the heart of the waters cleaving it into two layers: upper and lower layers of water.

Genesis 1:7 describes the result of 1:6: *And God made the firmament, [the vault of heaven] and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.* God separated the atmospheric waters from the terrestrial waters by an arching expanse or the sky. In addition, this expanse divided the cloud masses above from the waters below” (pp. 44-45).

- B. How do we know the “firmament” is heaven? Because God called the firmament “heaven” in 1:8. This is the atmosphere; the air we breathe. The air separates the earth’s waters (oceans, lakes, streams) from the atmospheric waters (carried in clouds). Atmospheric air prevents us from living in a continual fog bank.
- C. John Phillips describes the work of the Second Day:

“God dealt next with the *disorder*. He began by *raising the clouds* (1:6-8). In terms of sheer mechanical engineering, the work of the second day of creation is astounding. The amount of vapor continually suspended in the air above us is estimated at 54 trillion, 460 billion tons! Water is 773 times the weight of air, so that gives some idea of the power required to separate the waters from the waters. The annual precipitation, in the form of rain and snow, that falls upon the earth is the equivalent of 186,000 cubic miles—enough to cover the entire earth to a depth of three feet. The supply of water above the earth is maintained by evaporation—the constant lifting of water from the earth into the atmosphere by the power of the sun” (John Phillips, *Exploring Genesis*, p. 41).

- D. There is a strong argument that the “firmament” (Heb. *Raqia*) is actually a firm dome surrounding the earth and the planetary system. Pete Enns explains:

“Ancient Israelites “saw” this barrier when they looked up. There were no telescopes, space exploration, or means of testing the atmosphere. They relied on what their senses told them. Even today, looking up at a clear sky in open country, the sky seems to “begin” at the horizons and reaches up far above. Ancient Israelites and others in that part of the world assumed the world was flat, and so it looked like the earth is covered by a dome, and the “blue sky” is the “water above” held back by the *raqia*. The translation “firmament” (i.e. *firm*) gets across the idea of a solid structure” (Pete Enns, *The Firmament of Genesis 1 is Solid but That’s Not the Point*, from biologos.org).

- E. Those who hold to the firmament as a fixed dome surrounding the earth and perhaps the entire Milky Way galaxy or even beyond should not be ostracized as ignorant or unscientific. There are many things we will not know for certain until we see Jesus. Christians may discuss cosmological issues not directly addressed in Scripture, but we should do so respecting different perspectives.
- F. The Second Day is the only day that does not include the words “and it was good.” This is likely because the work of separating waters would not be

completed until the Third day (when the waters would be separated from the dry land). Interestingly, the Third Day contains the words “It was good” two times!